# **Article 7: Gaslamp Planned District**

("Gaslamp Planned District" added 3-27-2007 by O-19588 N.S.; effective 4-26-2007.)

## **Division 3: Zoning and Subdistricts**

("Zoning and Subdistricts" added 3-27-2007 by O-19588 N.S.; effective 4-26-2007.)

## §157.0301 Character of the Area

- (a) The architecture of the area is characterized by structures erected during a 30 year period from 1880 to 1910. The buildings are typically two or three stories high and are constructed of common brick with continuous facades at the property line. Ground floors are frequently 20 feet high with cornices separating them from the upper floors. Corbeling is very often found at the terminal cornice, particularly in the case of brick buildings. The fronts of buildings are often designed with closely set bays framed with segmental, stilted or flat arches, 10 to 12 feet apart. The openings are deep-set and the entrances are typically inset. Heavy ornate cornices and spandrels, carefully detailed parapets and bay windows are also typical design elements.
- (b) A significant number of buildings within the Gaslamp Quarter Historic District typify the desired architecture of the Gaslamp Quarter. For further information, refer to the San Diego Historical Resources Board Register, National Register of Historic Places, or the Gaslamp Quarter Planned District Ordinance and Urban Design and Development Manual.

("Character of the Area" added 3-27-2007 by O-19588 N.S.; effective 4-26-2007.)

#### §157.0302 General Design Regulations

Concurrent with the adoption of this Planned District Ordinance, the City Council shall by resolution also adopt architectural and design standards to be used in evaluating the appropriateness of any development for which a permit is applied under this Planned District Ordinance. Such architectural and design standards shall be filed in the office of the City Clerk as a numbered document.

- (a) Building Height Regulations
  - (1) Basic Building Height Limit (60 Foot Height Limit).
    - (A) Basic building height in the Gaslamp Quarter shall be limited to 60 feet including parapets and appurtenances.

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- (B) Any new structure must maintain a minimum of 30 feet at the property line.
- (C) Ground floors shall be a minimum of 12 feet in height (except where adjacent buildings have less than a 12 foot ground floor) and separated from the upper floors by a continuous projecting band, articulated recess or cornice.
- (D) Ground floor treatment shall be pedestrian in scale, storefront character and design detail.
- (E) The maximum horizontal roof dimension for building elements 60 feet or more in height shall be no more than 75 feet along street frontages of Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Avenues.
- (F) Projects on parcels 30,000 square feet or more shall modulate building heights for variation and articulation of building bulk with respect to the historic Gaslamp quarter lot pattern and relate building mass to adjacent structures.
- (2) Maximum Building Height (75 Foot Height Limit)

At the discretion of the President, buildings in the Gaslamp Quarter may achieve a maximum height of up to 75 feet with review and comment by the Historical Resources Board prior to action by the President. Buildings exceeding 60 feet in height shall be in general accord with the architectural and historic character reflected in the Gaslamp Quarter for streetwall definition, site relationships, horizontal and vertical building form as well as architectural detail and fabric.

- (A) Buildings that exceed the basic 60 foot height limit shall maintain a continuous vertical streetwall.
- (B) Excess bulk or building elements above 60 feet shall not visually intrude into the district nor adversely affect view, nor in any other way significantly compromise the scale and character of adjacent block faces.
- (C) Additional building floors shall be permitted above the cornice provided that the facades of these floors continue the rhythm, proportion and detail of the main building.
- (D) Building facades and elements exceeding 60 feet in height shall continue the traditional lot rhythm and vertical design

- proportion of symmetrically stacked window openings, building bays and details that respect the existing tall, narrow profile of the historic buildings in the district.
- (E) The maximum horizontal roof dimensions for buildings greater than 60 feet in height shall be no more than 75 feet along street frontages of Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Avenues.
- (F) On parcels 30,000 square feet or more, projects shall modulate building heights for variation and articulation of building bulk with respect to the historic Gaslamp Quarter lot pattern and relate building mass to adjacent structures.
- (G) On parcels 30,000 square feet or more south of Island, the City Council may grant an additional height exception up to 125 feet provided that the maximum floor-area-ratio shall not exceed 6.0, and building elements greater than 75 feet in height shall observe a setback of 50 feet along Fifth Avenue.
- (b) Street Wall Criteria and Site Relationships
  - (1) Site Relationships.

Historically, buildings in the Gaslamp were built to the property line facing each street. Modern setbacks for plazas and landscaped buffers were not part of Victorian architecture or considered appropriate for retail development at the turn of the century. The streets and sidewalks provided open space for pedestrian activity, social and commercial vitality to the area. The Gaslamp Quarter is characterized by the traditional street wall and building geometry.

- (A) Building mass, placement and entry relationship shall be functionally and aesthetically compatible with their surroundings.
- (B) Infill construction along the existing street frontage shall maintain matching setbacks which are consistent with adjacent development to provide a continuous facade appearance along the street.
- (C) Development of whole and half block sites (parcels 30,000 square feet or larger) shall respect the traditional Gaslamp Quarter character, building configuration as well as lot patterns assembled from 25 and 50-foot wide lots.

- (D) Site design and building entry elements shall contribute to the continuity of pedestrian scale, storefront character and street activity.
- (E) Buildings containing an east- west facade shall incorporate at least one primary entrance on that facade. A minimum of 60 percent street level on the east- west facade shall be storefront with direct access from the subject street.

## (2) Street Wall Requirements

New infill buildings shall provide a continuous street wall plane and strong street edge definition at the property line. Street wall glazing should be deeply recessed, with detailed window frames permitted to protrude beyond the front face of the building. All windows except for the ground floor shall have a longer vertical dimension than horizontal dimension. Windows should be rhythmically spaced, matching the bay spacing below and sensitive to the general proportions of windows in nearby buildings.

- (A) The street wall of all buildings shall be continuous at the property line except for storefront entry.
- (B) Cornices, bay windows, and ornamentation may project beyond the property line at upper levels to a distance no greater than 3'-0". All other local codes and ordinances must be met in addition to this criteria.
- (C) Penthouses, building appurtenances and other roof top elements shall respect the historic character and structural forms of adjacent buildings.
- (D) Awnings and canopies may project over the sidewalk as follows:
  - (i) A maximum of 5'-0" projection beyond the property line is permitted for standard awnings at street level.
  - (ii) A maximum of 3'-0" projection beyond the property line is permitted for awnings above street level.

- (iii) One entry way canopy per building may be permitted to project a maximum of 8'-0" beyond the property line to establish the main entry, subject to approval by the President and consistent with all other codes and ordinances.
- (E) The window area above street level shall be no greater than 60 percent of the total facade.
- (F) Street level building setbacks to create plazas, parks, or other public open space will not be permitted.

## (c) Horizontal Building Form Criteria

A strong, horizontal division of major building elements can be seen in the Gaslamp Quarter. Most of the historic buildings are characterized by a delineation of a building base, middle, and top. Street level storefronts, restaurants and other pedestrian oriented shops establish the building base. The middle portion of the building is defined by floor-to-floor building heights and punctuated with narrowly spaced window openings. Typically, the top of historic Gaslamp Quarter buildings is generally highly articulated and ornamental and often provides the most expressive design features. However, any roof forms or articulation at the top of new construction shall be contemporary, understated in design and always subordinate to the elements, features and forms of actual historic roof lines.

## (1) Architectural Form

- (A) The building base includes those elements relating to the sidewalk pedestrian environment such as entries, show windows, and business signage. It is differentiated from the upper part of the buildings by the storefront band.
  - (i) The building base shall be defined by a projecting band and/or articulated recess in a continuous horizontal direction across the building facade. This line shall be established no lower than 12 feet and no higher than 20 feet.
  - (ii) A further definition of the base is highly encouraged such as with triangular awnings, or a change in material.

- (iii) The building base and entry shall be designed to integrate storefronts, signage and window display space into the overall fabric of the building form.
- (B) The middle of the building contains the window openings which coincide with the horizontal floor bands above the street level and may be capped with a cornice.
  - (i) Belt courses and moldings below the cornice are encouraged but not required.
  - (ii) The traditional ornamental cornice is not required. The effect can be achieved with contemporary materials and design.
- (C) The top of the building refers to roofing elements that terminate above the horizontal floor bands and cornice. The following must be appropriately addressed in the design of building tops.
  - (i) Additional building floors are permitted above the cornice provided the facades of these floors continue the proportion and detail of the main building.
  - (ii) Elevator penthouses and attic elements shall set back from the street facade and cover no more than 30 percent of rooftop area. Such elements shall be subordinate in architectural importance to the main building facade below and shall not be visible from any of the surrounding streets.
  - (iii) Building elements exceeding 60 feet in height shall be in accordance with criteria for maximum building height.
- (2) Floor-to-Floor Heights
  - (A) The exterior facades of new construction and infill buildings must respect the floor-to-floor heights typical of adjoining structures. A lesser floor height may be permitted subject to approval of the President to allow for mezzanines and design expression for other contemporary uses.

(B) Where above grade parking is proposed, all floors must be level, with ramping systems internal to the project. This is to insure proper horizontal proportions and detail on the exterior facades.

## (d) Vertical Building Proportion Criteria

- (1) The historic development of the Gaslamp Quarter occurred on blocks subdivided into 25' x 100' lots. Individual buildings generally developed on small parcels assembled from these lots. Thus, a majority of the existing historic buildings in the district are either 25 or 50 feet wide. The result is a predominance of buildings incorporating narrow windows and vertical building proportions.
- (2) Accordingly, historic buildings in the district reflect reinforcement of vertical elements in window openings, building bays and details such as pilasters and columns. Their vertical emphasis creates a rhythm across the facade that breaks down the horizontal bulk of buildings.
  - (A) Infill Buildings.

The facades of infill buildings shall be organized into regular bays of symmetrically stacked fenestration.

- (i) All windows above the street level shall have a dominant vertical proportion.
- (ii) Show windows at the street level may vary from the vertical proportion provided they are coordinated with the upper level fenestration.
- (iii) Columns, pilasters, reveals, and other details may be used in a contemporary manner to enhance verticality and continuity.

## (B) Corner Buildings

In addition to the criteria for infill buildings, corner buildings shall develop fully articulated facades on both street frontages. These facades must include strong vertical demarcation of the corner building form. The portion of corner buildings 50 feet in from the corner at the intersection may be distinguished by changes in height, materials, fenestration, offsets, and reveals. No diagonal corner entries shall be permitted.

## (e) Architectural Fabric and Materials

- (1) Historic structures in the district are generally constructed of substantial, highly finished, natural materials. The natural color of materials and earth tones predominate. New buildings should maintain the quality of materials expressed in existing buildings. Color and lighting should be used to compliment natural materials and highlight architectural forms and details. Buildings will be encouraged to use storefront spotlights to help project the buildings appearance and contribute to a secure well-lit streetscape environment.
- (2) Brick masonry, stone, granite, or highly finished and detailed plaster are required facing materials. Ceramic tile may be used for limited areas. The use of plaster shall be limited to 20 percent of the base or 60 percent of the overall building facade.
- (3) Detailing may be wood, ornamental sheet metal, carved or cast stone, tile, brick, or terra cotta.
- (4) Storefront framing elements such as bulkheads may be painted wood, cast iron, fiberglass, or other highly finished, substantial materials.
- (5) Window frames should be painted wood, painted steel sash, or high quality natural metal finishes. Reflective silver aluminum storefront and window systems are not permitted.
- (6) Natural masonry colors and earth tones should dominate. Accent color schemes are encouraged subject to review by the President. Color samples should be provided by the applicant.

#### (f) Architectural Detail

(1) A dominate design characteristic found in the contributing buildings of the district is the rich architectural detail and ornamentation. Building elements, features and forms shall be contemporary in design integrity as well as respect the authenticity of historical Gaslamp Quarter styles and details.

#### (A) Window/Glazing Treatment

(i) Window openings should be punched into the wall plane and windows set back a minimum of 4 inches from the outside wall plane.

- (ii) No reflective or tinted glass is permitted.
- (iii) When existing buildings are renovated, "blocked" or altered window openings are encouraged to be replaced with new or restored window frames to match the original opening.
- (iv) Operable sash windows and multi- pane glass are encouraged.
- (v) Articulated window head and sill details are strongly encouraged.

#### (B) **Building Facades**

- (i) Storefront and building cornices and parapets may be articulated in profile.
- (ii) Building cornices may be embellished with decorative flag and banner poles.
- Columns, pilasters, and belt courses may be used for (iii) relief of flat wall-plane areas.
- (iv) The use of masonry is encouraged for embellishment with color, pattern, profile, texture, and shape. This may include varying coursing patterns, custom shapes, colors and details such as quoins and belt courses in a contemporary manner.
- (v) Additional detail materials such as ornamental metal, cast masonry, concrete, and tile are permitted provided that a contemporary design integrity is maintained.
- Criteria for Courtyards, Arcades and Alley Spaces (g)
  - (1) A unique characteristic of the Gaslamp Quarter is the interior block open spaces that frequently occur where buildings are set back from the mid-block property line. Where totally surrounded by existing historic buildings, internal alley spaces should be encouraged to serve adjacent buildings. New courtyards and arcades could be developed through buildings linking them to the street.

- (2) Internal spaces with open alley connections may be improved to invite public circulation. Back courtyards could support specialty retail, restaurant and entertainment activities with street level entry. Rooftop terraces and balconies facing these internal courts and streets should be encouraged. Building sides facing courts and streets internal to the block may be oriented to these spaces with consideration for available light, air and view.
  - (A) Subject to building and fire codes, party walls may include recessed windows or alcoves for fenestration if located above the height of possible adjacent development.
  - (B) Rear and side walls adjoining interior block open space should incorporate fenestration to take advantage of light and air and provide access to useable open space.
  - (C) Roof decks and step back terraces should be incorporated in order to increase rear entrance exterior open space.
  - (D) Mid-block connections will not be permitted where it is determined that it would be detrimental to the vitality of street front uses.
- (h) Roofs

In general, roofs shall not be visible from the street.

(i) Remodeling

To preserve the historical integrity of the Gaslamp Quarter, all exterior remodelings must be in character with the original style of the building in question, regardless of its era.

("General Design Regulations" added 3-27-2007 by O-19588 N.S.; effective 4-26-2007.)

## §157.0303 Permitted Uses

In the Gaslamp Quarter Redevelopment Project Area, no building or improvement or portion thereof shall be erected, constructed, converted, established, altered, or enlarged, nor shall any premises be used except for one or more of the following purposes:

(a) Retailing of consumer convenience goods and dispensing of consumer services from the following establishments:

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- (1) Antique shops
- (2) Art galleries
- (3) Bakeries including combination retail/wholesale establishments
- (4) Barber shops
- (5) Beauty shops
- (6) Bicycle shops
- (7) General bookstore. A general bookstore is an establishment engaged in the buying, selling or trading of new and/or used books and periodicals of general interest. A general bookstore does not include an "Adult Bookstore" as described in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a).
- (8) Boutiques
- (9) Camera shops
- (10) Clothing stores
- (11) Confectionaries (candy stores)
- (12) Decorator and home accessory shops
- (13) Delicatessens
- (14) Drug stores
- (15) Financial institutions
- (16) Florists
- (17) Food stores not exceeding 10,000 sq. ft.
- (18) Gift and novelty shops. Excluding any establishment listed and described in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a).
- (19) Hardware stores
- (20) Hobby shops

- (21) Ice cream parlors
- (22) Import and art objects stores
- (23) Jewelry stores
- (24) Locksmith shops
- (25) Leather goods stores
- (26) Luggage shops
- (27) Nightclubs, excluding an "Adult Cabaret" as described in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a)
- (28) Nurseries
- (29) Music stores
- (30) Open air cafes (sidewalk cafes not located in public right-of-way)
- (31) Pawn shops
- (32) Pet shops
- (33) Photographic studios. Excluding any establishment listed and described as an Adult Entertainment Establishment in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a).

This provision does not apply to any school of art which is operated by any person or entity which meets the requirements established in the Education Code of the State of California for the issuance of diplomas, and is authorized under the Education Code to issue diplomas.

- (34) Post offices
- (35) Wholesale and/or retail produce markets for the sale of fresh fruit, produce, flowers, plants, meat, poultry and groceries
- (36) Entertainment Clubs, Comedy Clubs, etc.
- (37) Restaurants (excluding drive-in and drive-thru restaurants), subject to the provisions of subsection F of this section

- (38) Shoe stores
- (39) Shoe repair shops
- (40) Shoe shine parlors
- (41) Sporting goods stores
- (42) Stationers and card shops. Excluding any establishment listed and described as an Adult Entertainment Establishment in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a).
- (43) Studios for art, dance and music. Excluding any establishment listed and described as an Adult Entertainment Establishment in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a).
  - This provision does not apply to any school of art which is operated by any person or entity which meets the requirements established in the Education Code of the State of California for the issuance of diplomas and is authorized under the Education Code to issue diplomas.
- (44) Supper clubs, excluding those establishments described under 27. "Nightclubs," subject to the provisions of Section 157.0204.
- (45) Tobacco shops
- (46) Travel agencies
- (47) Theaters. Excluding an establishment listed and described as an Adult Entertainment Ordinance as an Adult Entertainment Establishment in Land Development Code Section 141.0601(a).
- (48) Variety stores
- (49) Wedding shops
- (50) Business and professional office uses (i.e., accountants, advertising agencies, architects, attorneys, contractors, doctors, engineers, insurance brokers, securities brokers, surveyors and graphic artists).
- (51) Computer and copy services stores (including sales, display, and copy reproduction). Does not include uses involving printing presses or other large commercial equipment.

- (52) An entertainment center or establishment, freestanding or operating in conjunction with any other permitted use enumerated herein, which utilizes electronic or mechanical games of skill or amusement not to exceed 5 devices.
- (b) The following uses shall be permitted only above or below the first floor:
  - (1) Drafting and blueprint services
  - (2) Medical appliances sales
  - (3) Office furniture and equipment sales
  - (4) Furniture stores
  - (5) Photographic equipment, supplies and film processing. This restriction shall apply to wholesale uses only.
  - (6) Funeral parlors
  - (7) Newspaper plants
  - (8) Lithography shops
  - (9) Radio and TV stations
  - (10) Wholesaling and warehousing
  - (11) Hotels, motels and apartment hotels (except for lobby and other ancillary functions).
  - (12) Addressing, secretarial and telephone answering services
  - (13) Electronic data processing, tabulating, and record keeping
  - (14) Labor unions and trade associations
  - (15) Medical, dental, biological, and X-ray laboratories
  - (16) Private clubs, fraternal organizations, and lodges
  - (17) Dwelling units

- (c) Specialized uses:
  - (1) Charitable organizations (nonprofit or otherwise) and their attendant activities.
  - (2) Churches, temples or buildings of a permanent nature used primarily for religious purpose
  - (3) Museums
  - (4) Tourists and historical information centers. A public facility wherein visitors and/or residents are given assistance and information about the historical nature of the Gaslamp Quarter and downtown area. The sale or distribution of food and the provision of lodging is prohibited for those specialized uses, except to employees of these organizations.
- (d) Other uses typically conducted within the street right-of-way during the 1880-1910 era; such as: flower sales, musicians, newsstands, shoeshine stands and sales of merchandise typically sold by street vendors during the 1880-1910 era, when such uses are in conjunction with the use of adjacent private property and have been authorized by an encroachment permit issued by the City Engineer pursuant to Sections 62.0620, 62.0630 and 157.0303(e).
- (e) Specialized uses in the street right-of- way which are consistent with the 1880-1910 era may be considered on all streets with the exception of Broadway. Proposed uses must meet safety and design criteria set forth in the Gaslamp Quarter Urban Design and Development Manual as adopted by resolution by the City Council. Prior to the use of street right-of-way for a specialized use, an encroachment permit shall have been obtained from the City Engineer, pursuant to Sections 62.0620, 62.0630 and 157.0303(e). A clear separation of the encroachment area and the remainder of the sidewalk shall be provided. A special use shall be conducted in conjunction with the use of the adjacent private property.

In addition to special uses, an encroachment permit may be granted to provide for:

- (1) Stairways to the basement and from upper floors of a building which provide access to under-utilized areas of a building and/or improve circulation for life-safety aspects of a building;
- (2) Awnings, canopies and marquees no closer than 2 feet from the curb line; and

- (3) Street furniture including street lights, benches, fountains, flags, water troughs and similar items.
  - Sidewalk cafes, authorized pursuant to this subsection, which propose to serve alcoholic beverages, shall be exempt from the provisions of Municipal Code, Section 56.54, providing the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages is within the confines of the encroachment area.
- (f) Notwithstanding anything in this Section to the contrary, no premises shall be used, in whole or in part, either directly or indirectly, by any person, including a local, state or federal government or any contractor or agent thereof, for the purposes of housing or assisting in any manner inmates or paroles from federal, state or county prisons or jails or for detaining any person(s) pursuant to the authority of any law.
- (g) Any other use which the Board of Directors may find to be similar in character to the uses, including accessory uses, enumerated in this section and consistent with the purpose and intent of the Gaslamp Quarter Planned District Ordinance. The adopted resolution embodying such findings shall be filed in the office of the City Clerk of the City of San Diego.

("Permitted Uses" added 3-27-2007 by O-19588 N.S.; effective 4-26-2007.)